

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method for transmitting packets among processing nodes within a data processing system, wherein said data processing system includes a plurality of processing nodes connected to each other via an interconnect, said method comprising:

initiating a request transaction from a master node to a plurality of receiving nodes;

generating a write counter number to be associated with said request transaction;

receiving a combined response from said receiving nodes by said master node;

sending a data packet from said master agent to an intended one of said receiving nodes according to said combined response; and

initiating a new request transaction, along with a new write counter number, immediately after said data packet has been sent ~~without waiting for~~ and before the receipt of an acknowledgement from said intended receiving node.

2. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said generating step further includes generating a new write counter number for each request transaction.

3. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein a number of bits within said write counter number = $\log_{10}(\text{number of nodes within said data processing system})/\log_{10}2$.

4. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said data processing system is a symmetric multiprocessor system.

5. (currently amended) An apparatus for transmitting packets among processing nodes within a data processing system, wherein said data processing system includes a plurality of processing nodes connected to each other via an interconnect, said apparatus comprising:

means for initiating a request transaction from a master node to a plurality of receiving nodes;

means for generating a write counter number to be associated with said request transaction;

means for receiving a combined response from said receiving nodes by said master node;

means for sending a data packet from said master agent to an intended one of said receiving nodes according to said combined response; and

means for initiating a new request transaction, along with a new write counter number, immediately after said data packet has been sent ~~without waiting for~~ and before the receipt of an acknowledgement from said intended receiving node.

6. (original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein said generating means further includes a write counter for generating a new write counter number for each request transaction.

7. (original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein a number of bits within said write counter number = $\log_{10}(\text{number of nodes within said data processing system})/\log_{10}2$.

8. (original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein said data processing system is a symmetric multiprocessor system.